1,94 R

## WHERE WE ARE WITH THE BANKHEAD ACT



A radio talk by D. W. Watkins, Assistant Chief, Cotton Production Section, A.A.A. delivered in the Department of Agriculture period, National Farm and Home Hour, Monday, July 23, 1934, broadcast by a network of 50 associate NBC radio stations.

--00000--

How do you do, Farm and Home Folks.

Congress passed the Bankhead Act and it was approved by the President on April 21. The cotton planting season was well advanced then, and it was almost finished. When the Joint Resolution providing funds for the administration of the Act was approved on May 25.

After the Act was approved, the Cotton Production Section of the A.A.A. was put in charge of the administration of those provisions for which the Secretary of Agriculture is responsible. The tax features of the Act are under the jurisdiction of the Commissioner of Internal Revenue in the Treasury Department.

In addition to the Administrative office in Washington, a State office has been set up in each cotton-producing State and county. In setting up these offices, existing Governmental agencies have been used as much as possible. The Division of Crop and Livestock Estimates worked out the basis of the State and county allotments and the Extention Service organized the field work. State and county conferences have been held in all the Cotton States and in most of the counties for instructional purposes and committees in each county have been organized to assist in contact work.

The special job of tagging old-crop cotton, as required by the Act, is being handled through a Tagging Unit in the Triple-A, which through nine central tag distribution points has been affixing tags to old cotton for the past fifteen days.

Including all of the printed matter for use in Washington and in the States and counties, the Government Printing Office has been called upon to print and distribute nearly fifty million pieces. This distribution of printed material, which is now nearing completion, includes such important documents as the exemption certificates printed on safety paper, the forms used by producers in applying for exemption certificates, and the instructions and regulations governing the issuance and handling of certificates.

The field organization, information service, and the service of supply may have progressed along three parallel lines. These lines have now converged upon the next step, namely, the filling out of applications for tax-exemption certificates by producers. The heavy part of the work of preparing applications will be completed during the next two to three weeks. As completed and approved by the Community and County Committees. They will be forwarded daily to the State office. Work in the State office will begin as soon as applications are submitted by the counties. Until the last certificate is issued, there will be continuous activity by everybody in a race against time. The State office, however, cannot actually issue certificates to a county until all the applications from that county are in. After that, the State office will issue

certificates to applicants through the county office. The work of the State is largely of a statistical nature based on the facts in the applications, and the most important job in connection with applications will be in the counties where the allotment basis for each applicant will be approved. The responsibility thus rests upon the Community and County Committees of seeing that applications which they approve are as correct and equitable as possible.

Ordinarily, it will not be necessary for producers to write Washington, to secure exemption certificates. By finding out locally when and where the application forms are available for filling out, producers will need only to go to that place and give the required information as to the cotton acreage and production on the farm to be covered by the application. This information must, according to the Act, be submitted under oath. The information in this application is all that will be required to determine the applicants share in the county allotment, as well as his right to any part of the State reserve of 10 per cent set up under the Act. The prompt filing of accurate applications will hasten completion of the job of issuing certificates.

Reports coming to the Cotton Production Section from the field indicate that local plans are matured and that cotton producers are ready for the next step in the program. In a letter from Assistant Director of Extension, T. Roy Reid, of Arkansas, he says: "We believe the administration of the Bankhead Bill is going to be effectively carried out in Arkansas." Similar expressions of attitude come from South Texas where cotton ginning is already underway and where a few emergency certificates have been issued. There has been some opposition to the Bankhead Act on the part of a few ginners, which, however, is not widespread. The President of one of the State Cotton Ginners Associations, writes, "We, as well as all our farmers, are one hundred per cent in favor of the Bankhead Bill." (end quotation).

Now folks, after all, the success of the program itself will have much to do with public sentiment as to its continuance in 1935. The next few months will give some indication as to how the dual cotton program works and will establish a basis of experience upon which to make desirable changes. It has long been a dream among cotton producers to utilize the power of Government in making effective a cotton control program. For those who think that some kind of permanent adjustment plan is necessary as a safeguard against recurring economic disasters, it would seem that a dual program of rental and benefit payments to cooperating producers coupled with a check on non-cooperators is logical, and that such a program may continue to receive approval. The objective of a greatly reduced cotton acreage for 1934 has been attained. This fact together with the further fact that any cotton adjustment plan made effective for 1935 will be more liberal as to the matter of acreage than is the present plan, is another factor favorable to continued approval by producers who do not want a return of the old order.